

As a licensed amateur radio operator, I support this Petition.

With the removal, at the World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03), of the international treaty obligation to require Morse Code proficiency of its Amateur Service licensees below 30 MHz, the FCC ought to revise its regulations forthwith to remove any Morse requirement for any class of Amateur Service license.

The Amateur Service provides an important resource for Homeland Security and disaster mitigation and recovery operations. Its trained operators, and privately owned equipment with fairly wide frequency agility, allow communications efforts to adapt to prevailing conditions to get the message through. However, in widespread disasters such as the recent multi-state power outage in August 2003 and Hurricane Isabel, the affected area is larger than the area which can be served by VHF and UHF frequencies available to the Technician class licensee, the fastest-growing class of licensee. A General or Extra class licensee, whose numbers are dwindling, must be somehow found in order to legally operate in the HF bands for large-area or long-distance communication.

The FCC itself, in its December 1999 Report and Order, noted that telegraphy was "just one of numerous diverse modes of radiocommunication." With the withdrawal of treaty obligations, and the necessity of increasing the Amateur Service's capability to communicate during large-scale disasters, I urge the Commission to heed petition RM-10786.